

Lady Bulldogs Finish Season at Sub-State By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Lady Bulldogs finished their season in the semi-final round of Sub-State with a 45-49 loss to the Wallace County Lady Wildcats in Sharon Springs on March 2. "Even though the game didn't go as we planned tonight, I am still very blessed with the best Golden Plains family and team!" said Jennifer Esparza-senior. "You better believe we played our hearts out."

The Bulldogs won the tip by senior Kaylie Schaben and junior KayCee Miller put the first points on the board for her 300th point of the season. The Wildcats responded with a couple of free throws and a three. Schaben answered back but the 'Cats pulled ahead. Another shot by Miller and a basket from junior Noel Ritter put the 'Dogs down 8-13.

'Cats added 4, the 'Dogs answered to close the spread slightly to 19-23 by half time. The third quarter was all Golden Plains with hustle and heart as an early Miller basket and free throw brought the game to within 1. Mabel Lugo followed for the lead. The 'Cats answered to extend their score but two free throws from Kaylie Schaben tied it up with 3 minutes left in the quarter. Brooke Stoll added two more free shots for the lead before the 'Cats hit a three for the lead. Schaben hit again but the 'Cats answered to tie it up. Baskets by Noel Ritter and Miller ended the third with the 'Dogs ahead 34-30.

Miller opened the fourth with 8 straight points to extend the Bulldog lead to 42-34 with five minutes to play. The 'Cats responded with ten to tie it up at 42. They then hit a three to pull ahead with just under 3 minutes on the clock. With just 6.7 seconds to play, senior Maggi Nieman hit a three for the final shot of the season. The Bulldogs were unable to make another score as the Wildcats went on to win the game 45-49. The Wildcats finished the tournament with a championship win over Wheatland/Grinnell to earn a trip to the state tournament.

Miller ended her season with 22 points for the Bulldogs. Nieman posted 8, Schaben 7, Ritter 4, Lugo 2, and Brooke Stoll 2. The girls concluded with a 17-4 season. All four teams they lost two will be playing in their state tournaments this week including Hill City, Quinter, Stockton, and Wallace County. "We had a great season this year and we just came up a little short in the semi final game of substate," said KayCee Miller, junior. "I think it shows our potential with all of our losses to opponents that will get the chance to play the state tournament!"

"I would like to thank my coaches, my teammates and our supports for a fun season," continued Miller. "You can bet that we will be back next year! I am excited for my senior season playing with my little sister!" "I enjoyed my four years with my team; it's all been a great experience," added Esparza. "It was a good season with the other two seniors, and I'm glad we got to experience it all together. Thank you to my team and our coaches that made this year's season a great one, and thank you to everyone who supported us."

"I really appreciate everything that our team has been through the past four years," said senior Maggi Nieman. "The support of the coaches, our teachers, our classmates, our community, and all our fans has been great. I want to thank them for their support."

"These past four years have been amazing," continued Kaylie Schaben. "We made it to state twice out of my four years! I am proud of and extremely thankful for my team, coaches, and all the fans that came to support us every game. I am going to miss my Bulldog family next year!"